

Courtney L Werner. The Role of Graduate-Level Archival Education in Preparing Archivists. A Master's Paper for the M.S. in L.S degree. April, 2019. 36 pages. Advisor: Denise Anthony

This study describes a questionnaire survey of archivists currently working in their first professional position after graduating from an archival master's program. The survey was conducted to determine how prepared the archivists felt starting their current roles, the types of institutions archivists are working in, and what factors contributed to feelings of preparedness. The survey responses demonstrated the range of opinions and experiences of archivists who have graduated from programs throughout the country. The levels of preparedness felt by archivists vary, but generally show that most feel prepared enough to transition from student to professional archivist after graduating from an archival master's program.

Headings:

Archives & education

Archives surveys

THE ROLE OF GRADUATE-LEVEL EDUCATION IN PREPARING ARCHIVISTS

by
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A Master's paper submitted to the faculty
of the School of Information and Library Science
of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Science in
Library Science.

Chapel Hill, North Carolina

April 2019

Approved by

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Introduction

Most graduate programs would most likely state that one of their primary goals, if not the primary goal, is to prepare students for careers in the field of that particular program. However, how much do we know of how well these programs are preparing students for the actual work they will perform on the job post-graduation? For many careers, on-the-job training and hands-on experience are the primary methods of establishing the skills and knowledge that are required to complete a job, and to complete that job successfully. What role, then, do graduate programs play in preparing professionals for their first jobs after graduation? This paper will consider these questions specifically in relation to the archival profession and archival master's graduate programs.

Many different kinds of archives, archivists, and archive programs exist. Archives can be national, state, or local archives; business; community; or any other collection of primary source material. For the purposes of this paper, the term "archives" encompasses any variety of archives that is professionally staffed and maintained by trained archivists. The term "archivist" follows the definition given by the Society of American Archivists (SAA), which states that archivists are those who "hold professional positions requiring adherence to national and international standards of practice and conduct in accordance with a professional code of ethics" ("What Are Archives?"). An archives program is any program that adheres to the guidelines for a graduate program in archival studies.

This paper analyzes the current state of archival master's programs and the pedagogy behind the development of these programs. It presents the methodology and results of a study aiming to discover how well those programs prepared archival professionals in their first professional roles post-graduation. The study sought to answer how prepared archival professionals felt in their first professional archivist role after graduating from an archives master's program, and to what degree the program contributed to their self-determined preparedness. The study will also seek to determine whether the type of archives an individual is working in (e.g. government archives, company archives, museum archives, etc.) affects the level of preparedness that individual felt they possessed when entering their first post-graduation archival role.

Literature Review

Introduction

To examine the extent to which recent graduates of archival graduate programs felt prepared by their chosen programs, it is necessary to first examine the history and current state of those programs, the philosophy behind the pedagogy of those in teaching positions at these programs, and the connection between these programs and the education of currently no hyphen working archival professionals. Because many archival graduate programs exist within Masters of Library Science and/or Masters of Information Science programs (or, broadly, Library and Information Science (LIS) programs), literature discussing LIS as a general topic will be reviewed as relevant material along with literature discussing archives education specifically.

History and Current State of Archival Graduate Programs

Certain scholars have written extensively and constructively on the topic of archival education, some of the most prominent being Terry Eastwood, and the often-paired Elizabeth Yakel and Jeannette Allis Bastian. In 1981, Eastwood became the first professor to teach at the University of British Columbia's School of Librarianship's two-year Master of Archival studies program. He taught there for thirty years, acting as its chair for twenty of those years (Eastwood, "A Personal Reflection" 76). He has written many articles and written or edited several books on archival theory and practice, with a particular focus on archival education. Eastwood's work was especially helpful in

understanding pedagogical thinking as well as the educational backgrounds of current archival professionals, while Yakel and Bastian have been particularly enlightening on the evolution of archival education, which did not receive the distinction of its own area of study until the 1990s as previously stated.

The newness of archival education is especially true in the United States, as Kevin White and Anne Gilliland point out in “Promoting Reflexivity and Inclusivity in Archival Education, Research and Practice,; the “archival profession developed comparatively later in the United States than the library profession and considerably later than the archival profession in Europe, where formal archival education began as early as the late eighteenth century in Bologna, Naples, and then, in 1821, most notably at the *École de Chartes* in Paris” (232). Richard Cox acknowledged the young nature of archival studies specifically in relation to graduate-level education, when he stated in 2006 that “any gathering of archival educators should be an occasion for anticipation and joy. In the United States just two decades ago, we lacked enough graduate educators to hold a meeting, or even to fill a modest sized restaurant table” (247). The newness of archival studies (as discussed in relation to North American programs) has both positive and negative implications for archives as a discipline. While the fact that archival studies are still a developing area means that there is significant room for growth and improvement, it also means that the area of study is still finding its footing in the realm of advanced studies.

According to much of the literature on graduate-level archival education, the archival discipline had yet to find a solid footing as of 2010. In their study on the core knowledge base of graduate-level archival education, Yakel and Bastian found that while

there seems to be a core literature supporting a core knowledge, “the literature was not consistent among similar courses” and there was “little indication that professional education has reached agreement on its core literature apart from the use of SAA Fundamental Series” (“Towards” 149). The authors lament this fact, as they assert that the “lack of a standardized curriculum impedes the ability not only to teach archival science, but to teach those who would then go out and become archival educators” (Yakel and Bastian, “Towards” 149). However, since then, there have been efforts made to develop standards in the core literature among archival programs. For example, the Archival Education and Research Institute (AERI) is a yearly institute that began in 2008, and has been growing each year since, that strives “to build the future of archival education and research” and provides “a venue to discuss and develop archival curricula and pedagogical approaches” (Punzalan).

Other issues that archival scholars have previously found in relation to graduate-level archival education is an inability to meet the requirements of teaching future archivists in an increasingly digital world. In her article “Developing and Implementing a Master of Archival Studies Program: A Collaborative Effort of a State University, a State Archives, and the National Archives and Records Administration,” Cherie Long states that “unfortunately, archival education has not kept pace with the world’s adaptation to the digital age” (110). However, since 2011 when Long wrote this, archival education has responded to this issue by establishing both independent programs specifically for digital curation as well as incorporating digitally-focused courses into established programs. For example, the DigCCurr Professional Institute was established by Dr. Helen Tibbo and Dr. Christopher Lee at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill to foster continued

learning of digital curation practices and related issues; and the University of Toronto established the Digital Curation Institute in 2010, in an effort to “be a focal point for digital curation and a world-class center of expertise in digital curation showing international leadership in interdisciplinary digital curation research, innovation, education, and advice.” (footnote to URL - <http://dci.ischool.utoronto.ca/>). Many graduate-level archival programs have also added digitally-minded courses as well as certificates in digital curation.

Pedagogy of Archival Study

Although there certainly exists literature discussing theories of teaching archival studies at the graduate level, there is not a great deal of agreement on what the core pedagogical methods are in the archives discipline in general, as briefly mentioned in the previous section. Many scholars, in fact, note the absence of what some refer to as a “sustainable model” for archival training (Buehl et al.). The authors continue to state that “although the growing body of scholarship on archival methods offers a plethora of practical resources, inspirational anecdotes, productive exemplars, and reflections on methods, no essay or chapter offers a sustainable model for training new scholars to work with archives, though Linda Ferreira-Buckley (582), Thomas P. Miller and Melody Bowdon (585), and Barbara L'Eplattenier (71) have called for one” (Buehl et al. 278).

There can be found, however, a significant amount of scholarship of pedagogical notions in terms of what archival scholars believe to be the most important elements and techniques that should be used in graduate-level archival education, both in and outside of the United States. The 2018 article “Teaching the Teacher: Primary Source Instruction

in American and Canadian Archives Graduate Programs” asserts that “by the 2000s, it was recognized that archival education could not be all theoretical or practical, but that both ways of thinking needed to be incorporated into the curriculum. A growing number of archivists argued that archives graduate programs needed to offer practice in reference and outreach just as much as they needed to elucidate the theoretical underpinnings of these practices” (Anderson et al. 189). The authors are stating that both practical and theoretical stances need to be considered pedagogically.

One such aspect of teaching that was specifically mentioned in an article discussing a LIS education program at a university in Australia was the issue of diversity in the realm of LIS workplaces. The authors assert that “another element, in Australia and other western countries, has been the increasing cultural diversity of the workforce. Thus, Library and Information Science (LIS) educators now need to consider the educational requirements to prepare students for these changed workplaces. What new skills are now needed for successful workplace participation?” (Sarrafzadeh and Williamson 89). This study found that one of the most effective ways to prepare students for successful workplace participation in an increasingly diverse workforce is to incorporate methods into the learning environment that facilitate trust amongst the students, such as suggested forms of communication and creating an environment that is conducive to positivity amongst peers (Sarrafzadeh and Williamson 93).

In his article “Are There Really New Directions and Innovations in Archival Education?” Cox points out several other important aspects of teaching archival studies such as the importance of the program’s faculty and documentation. Cox argues that “we [the archival profession] have had a number of evaluations suggesting that archival

knowledge is dependent on the establishment of archival faculties residing in universities. Much of my focus is on the crucial role of the faculty, rather than on educational outcomes or even delivery systems” (248).

Cox’s statement identifies an important point; the pedagogy does not matter if those teaching the material are not successful in acting on that pedagogy. He continues to say that he worries “that there is a shift towards ‘credentialism,’ with the discussions about competencies for curriculum formation and delivery,” further noting that there is a “lack of comfort felt by archival educators when asked about the skills they teach and the skills their students require” (248). Cox also asserts, in relation to how archival studies should be conducted, that “as professors, we should be change agents, critiquing present practice, gathering information about new approaches to strengthen the archival mission, and engaging with the public and policymakers about the importance of records and record-keeping” (249). Cox also points to teaching the literature surrounding the archival field as a vital element of teaching archival studies.

A range of archival scholars join Cox in stressing the notion of the importance of teaching the literature of the field, which he acknowledges when he states “if archivists are to be educated as experts in records and recordkeeping systems, then they need to follow the scholarship addressing this topic wherever it may lead” (250). Eastwood echoes these sentiments specifically in relation to appraisal, stating that “students are expected to read widely in the literature on appraisal” (“Teaching and Learning” 365). In addition, Yakel and Bastian describe archival education programs as being “supported by a large body of archival literature,” implying that the literature is an important element of archival studies (“Are We There Yet” 97).

Another element that, according to archival scholars, is important to the teaching of archival studies, is teaching with primary sources. Anderson et al. claim that “since archivists teach in a variety of ways, integrating teaching with primary sources into the archives curriculum benefits not only those who work in the classroom to support the ‘pedagogical aims of their institutions,’ but also archivists who provide one-on-one instruction in the use, care, and content of archives during reference interactions with patrons” (192). The authors continue to say that, in conjunction with teaching with primary sources, pedagogical skills should also be considered when deciding what should be taught to archival students, reporting that “archival literature and job postings alike demonstrate the demand for archivists with pedagogical skills” (Anderson et al. 193). The authors claim that teaching pedagogical skills along with teaching with primary sources will prepare students for a much wider range of potential jobs post-graduation.

Educational Backgrounds of Current and Emerging Archival Professionals

While a master’s degree in archival studies (often in the form of a concentration within a Masters of Library Science (MLS) or Masters of Information Science (MIS)) is becoming more and more important to possess for those entering the profession - as more and more entry-level jobs are listing a master’s degree as a required minimum qualification - it has not always been a necessary step in the process of becoming an archivist. Yakel and Bastian completed a report in 2006 that found “in terms of entry-level education for an archival job, the profession is currently in transition between offering on-the-job training and requiring a master’s degree” (“Part 4” 349). In Alan

Gabehart's study, "Qualifications Desired by Employers for Entry-Level Archivists in the United States," he reported that, back in 1992, 36.7% of entry-level archivist positions listed a bachelor's degree (with no specific field identified) as a minimum educational requirement, while only 30.8% required a Master's of Library Science. An even smaller number, 13.8%, required a master's degree in History (430).

These numbers have changed drastically over the years. The 2006 Yakel and Bastian study found that "graduate school has grown in importance as the primary source of archival education," reporting that "overall, 35% of respondents identified graduate school as their primary source of archival education. However, this number is far higher for younger archivists; 64% of respondents under twenty-nine years old listed graduate school as their principal archival education source" ("Part 4" 350). These statistics come from a study conducted in 2006, indicating that the percentage of archival professionals who would list graduate school as their primary source of archival education would be an even higher number if the same study were conducted today. The same study also more concisely states that "graduate archival education is currently the primary form of entry into the archival profession and was the primary form for a majority of the archivists under fifty years old" (Yakel Bastian, "Part 4" 349).

This has only become truer in recent years, as a 2017 Eastwood article notes that "there is evidence that by any measure the archival profession is well educated. A comprehensive survey of the profession in the United States revealed that 4,816 out of a total of 5,620 respondents reported that they had a master's degree, and 473 had a PhD in some field other than archives" ("A Personal Reflection" 78). For comparison, this statistic comes out to be approximately 85.7%. The number of archival professionals with

master's degree gets higher as the age of those individuals gets lower. The same Eastwood article also reported that "of those 25-29 years of age about 70% and of those 30-34 over 60% had some form of graduate archival education" ("A Personal Reflection" 78). This demonstrates the growing importance of archival education as opposed to strictly on-the-job training, as well as the fact that most archivists now have some form of graduate-level archival education. However, while it is clear that education now plays an important role in the development of emerging archivists, it is not as clear to what extent archival programs contribute to job preparedness felt by graduates. The following sections attempt to discover the role that graduate-level archival programs play in the perceived preparedness of archivists.

Methods

Overview

A survey was the main tool utilized to obtain the data needed to conduct this study. The research for this study consisted of a Qualtrics survey that was sent to the population of interest to this study, recent graduates of archival graduate programs. A link to the survey was posted to the general discussion board of the SAA website. In order to send out and collect data from the survey, this research study was submitted to the UNC IRB. It was approved on February 7, 2019 and was assigned study number 18-3358. Using the information generated from the analyses, there was then a discussion of possible implications and conclusions that could be made regarding the self-determined preparedness of archivists early in their careers.

Survey and Distribution

The survey consisted of 12 questions, three of which were two-part questions, aimed at generating responses that would provide insight into whether or not participants felt prepared by their graduate programs in their first professional roles following graduation. The survey included 5 multiple choice questions, one ranking question, and 6 free-response questions. The last 3 of the free-response questions included 2 parts; the first part requesting a write-in answer, and the second part requesting a 'yes' or 'no' response, and another write-in answer if 'yes' was selected). All questions were optional. Figure 1 shows the survey.

Figure 1

| |
|--|
| <p>1. What degree do you hold?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> Master of Library Science <input type="radio"/> Master of Information Science <input type="radio"/> Master of History <input type="radio"/> Other (please specify) |
| <p>2. From what school/program did you obtain your degree?</p> |
| <p>3. In what capacity did you obtain your degree?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> Specialization/concentration <input type="radio"/> Some archives courses Other (please specify): |
| <p>4. Did you work at an internship, field experience, volunteer experience, or part-time job in an archive or library while a student in your graduate program?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |
| <p>5. Overall, how prepared did you feel in your first professional archivist role after graduating from your archives master's program?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> Not at all prepared <input type="radio"/> Minimally prepared <input type="radio"/> Somewhat prepared <input type="radio"/> Mostly prepared <input type="radio"/> Extremely prepared |
| <p>6. Please rank the following factors on how well they prepared you for your first professional archivist role after graduating from your archives master's program (1=most helpful, 3=least helpful) (move options by dragging)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> Archives graduate program (i.e. coursework) <input type="radio"/> Internships/jobs/field experiences held while in program <input type="radio"/> Internships/jobs/field experiences held before program |
| <p>7. What type of archives do you work in? (e.g. college/university, corporate, government, museum, etc.)</p> |
| <p>8. What is your job title?</p> |

9. How long have you been in that role?

- Less than one year
- 1-3 years
- 4-5 years
- More than 5 years

For the remaining questions, please list your three main job responsibilities and any previous experience you may have had with each responsibility.

10A. Responsibility 1:

10B. Did you have experience with responsibility 1?

- If yes, please describe how you obtained that experience (e.g. job, internship, volunteering, coursework, etc.):
- No

11A. Responsibility 2:

11B. Did you have experience with responsibility 2?

- If yes, please describe how you obtained that experience (e.g. job, internship, volunteering, coursework, etc.):
- No

12A. Responsibility 3:

12B. Did you have experience with responsibility 3?

- If yes, please describe how you obtained that experience (e.g. job, internship, volunteering, coursework, etc.):
- No

In order to distribute the survey to the desired population, a link to the survey was posted to the general discussion board of the SAA website along with a statement requesting that only individuals who are currently working in their first professional archivist role after graduating from an archival graduate program participate. The statement also informed participants that their participation was voluntary. Site

administrators approved the post and the survey before being posted publicly to the discussion board. There was no way to determine whether respondents were actually in their first professional archivist roles post-graduation other than trusting that only those who fit the described population participated; results from the survey were analyzed under the assumption that this was true.

Data Analysis

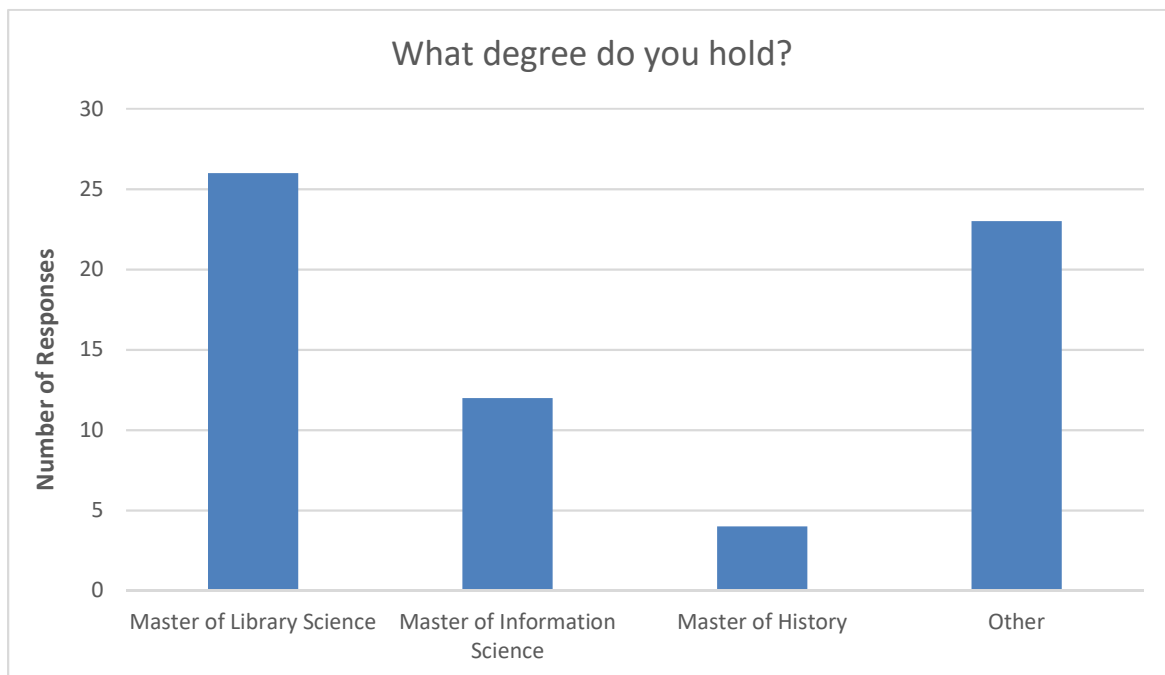
To analyze the data, the results were first reported as individual statistics, and then analyzed comparatively to discover if the results indicated anything in response to the posed research questions. The analysis of the six free response questions involved applying a main characteristic to each question individually, and then combining the individual characteristics to identify the main themes that emerged in response to each question.

Results

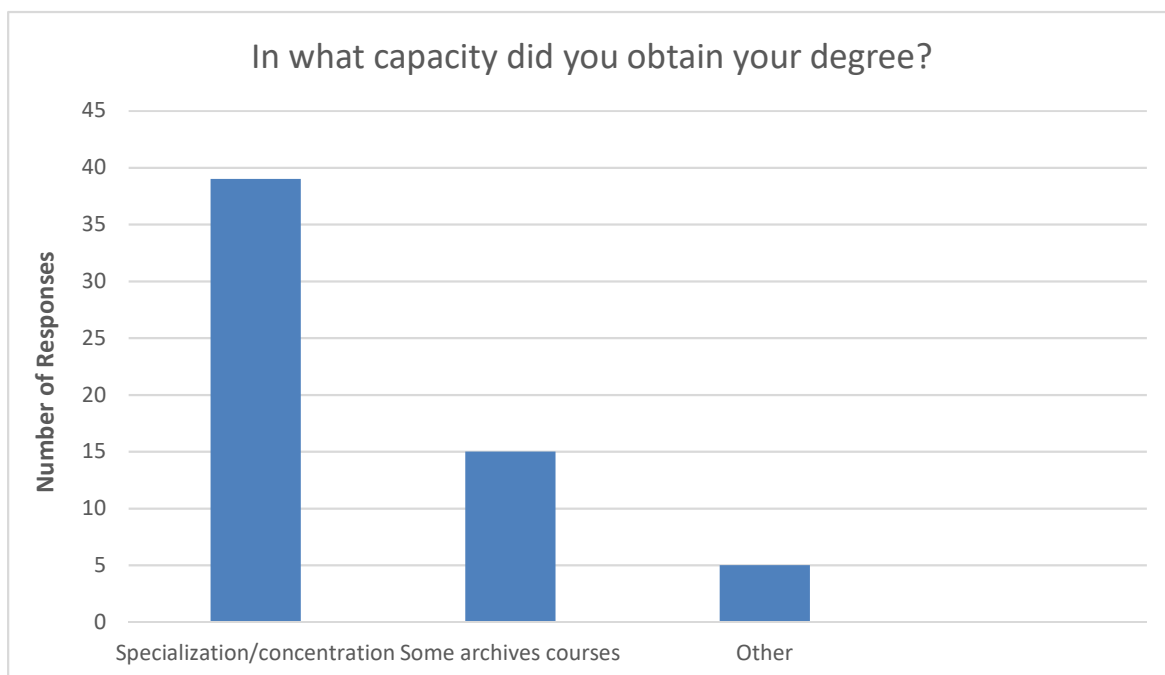
Analysis of Survey Data

Sixty-five people responded to the survey over a period of three weeks. Within those 65 responses, 59 were either fully completed or mostly completed; six were uncompleted, and as such were deleted. This left 59 sets of responses that were included in this results section. The recruitment statement that was included with the link to the survey requested that only archivists in their first job post-graduation from their graduate program participate in the survey, and, as such, results are presented and analyzed with the assumption that all responses are from this specific population.

The first of the multiple-choice questions asked about what degree each respondent held that qualified as an archives graduate program, with most selecting either Master of Library Science (MLS) (40%) or Other (35.38%) (see Figure 2). For those who selected other, all but 3 respondents wrote in that they held a Master of Library and Information Science (MLIS): two of these wrote in Master of Archival Studies, and one held a Master of Education.

Figure 2

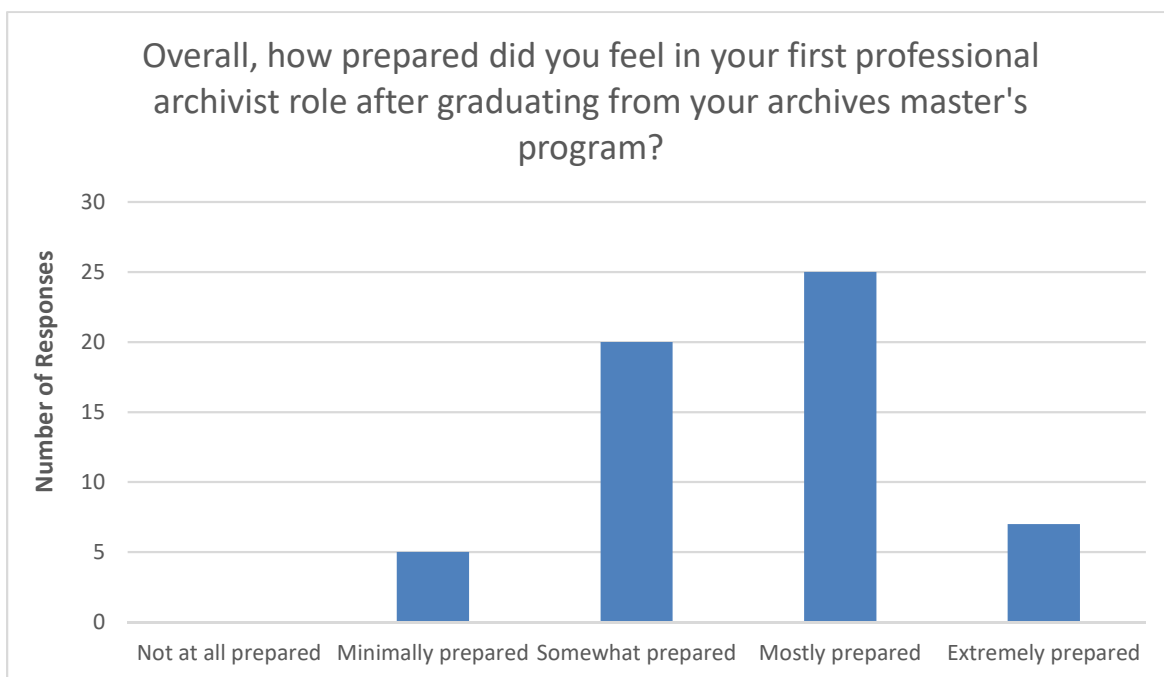
Asking in what capacity participants received their graduate-level archival education, a majority (66.10%) selected Specialization/concentration as their response, 25.42% chose Some archives courses, and 8.47% (5) selected Other (see Figure 3). Of the 5 respondents who chose Other, two stated that they received a specific archival degree (the same two respondents who in question one wrote in Master of Archival Studies), one stated they attended an archives institute, one wrote in “all archival courses outside of required course work,” and the remaining one answered his or her program “doesn’t have a specific archives specialization but [he or she] took every archives related course possible.”

Figure 3

The third multiple choice question simply asked whether or not participants had worked at an internship, field experience, volunteer experience, or part-time job in an archive or library while a student in their graduate program. Not surprisingly, 96.49% responded Yes, while the remaining 3.51%, which equated to 2 respondents, selected No. The next multiple choice question asked, overall, how prepared participants felt in their first professional archivist role after graduating from their archives master's program. 43.86% of respondents selected Mostly prepared, 35.09% selected Somewhat prepared, 12.28% selected Extremely prepared, 8.77% selected Minimally prepared, and 0 selected Not at all prepared (see Figure 4). The final multiple choice question asked for how long respondents have been in their current role. Not surprisingly, as the survey was aimed specifically at those currently in their first professional archival role after graduation,

most participants selected 1-3 years (49.12%). The next highest response rate was 26.32% for Less than one year, More than 5 years received 14.04% of responses, and 4-5 years received the lowest response rate of 10.53%.

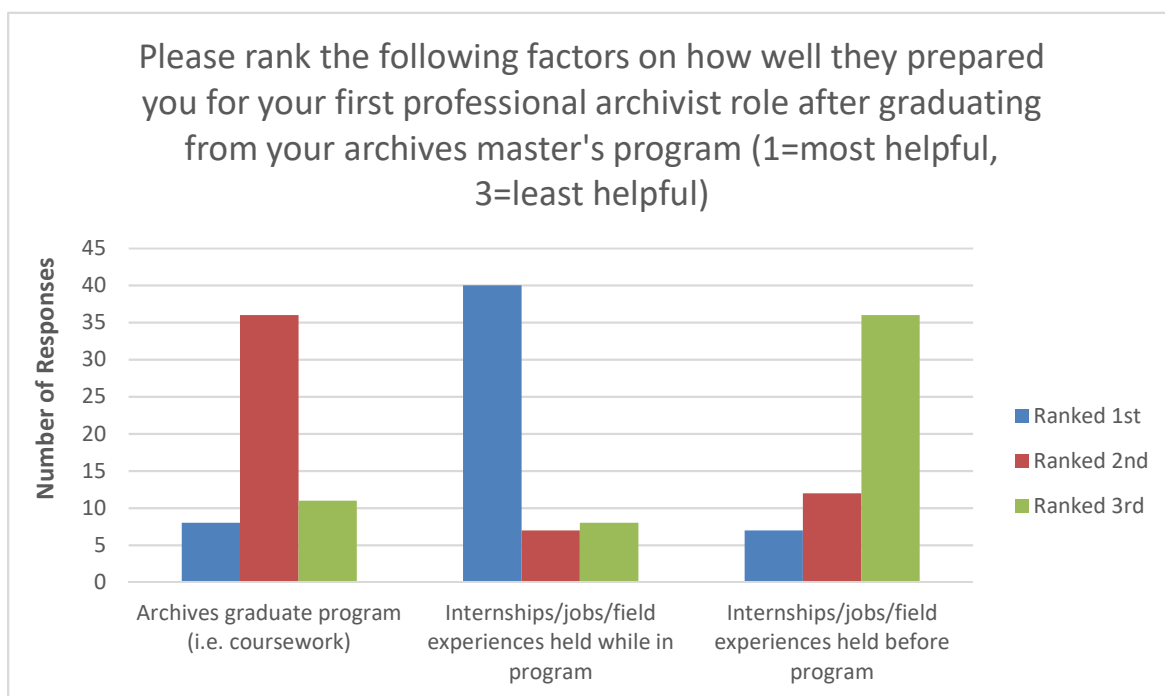
Figure 4



The next question analyzed was the ordering question, which asked respondents to rank 3 different factors on how much each factor contributed to their feeling of preparedness. The options were: Archives graduate program (i.e. coursework), internships/jobs/field experiences held while in program, and internships/jobs/field experiences held before program. Forty respondents ranked the option of internships/jobs/field experiences held while in program first, 8 respondents ranked archives graduate program first and 7 ranked internships/jobs/field experiences held

before program first. Archives graduate program was most often ranked second (36 respondents) while 12 ranked internships/jobs/field experiences held before program second and 7 ranked internships/jobs/field experiences held while in program second. Internships/jobs/field experiences held while in program received the most third place rankings with 36 ranking it third. Eleven ranked archives graduate program as third, and 8 ranked internships/jobs/field experiences held while in program third (see Figure 5).

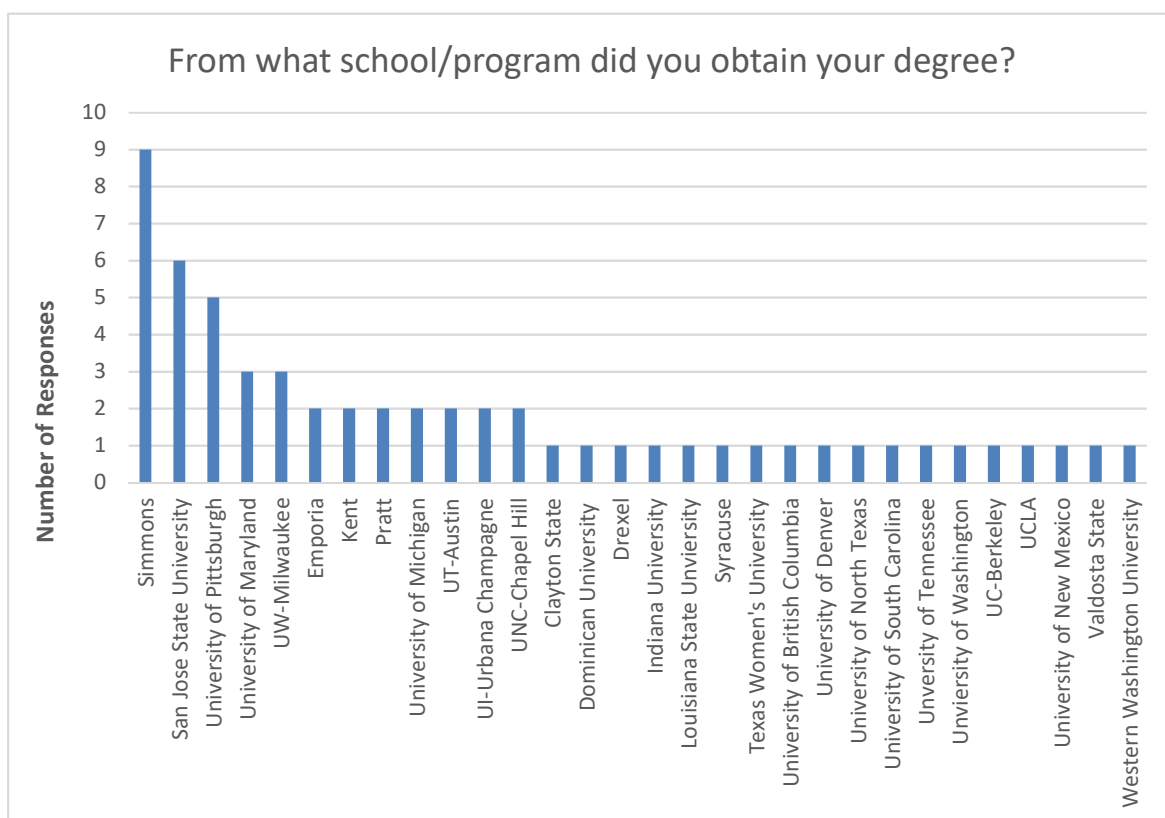
Figure 5



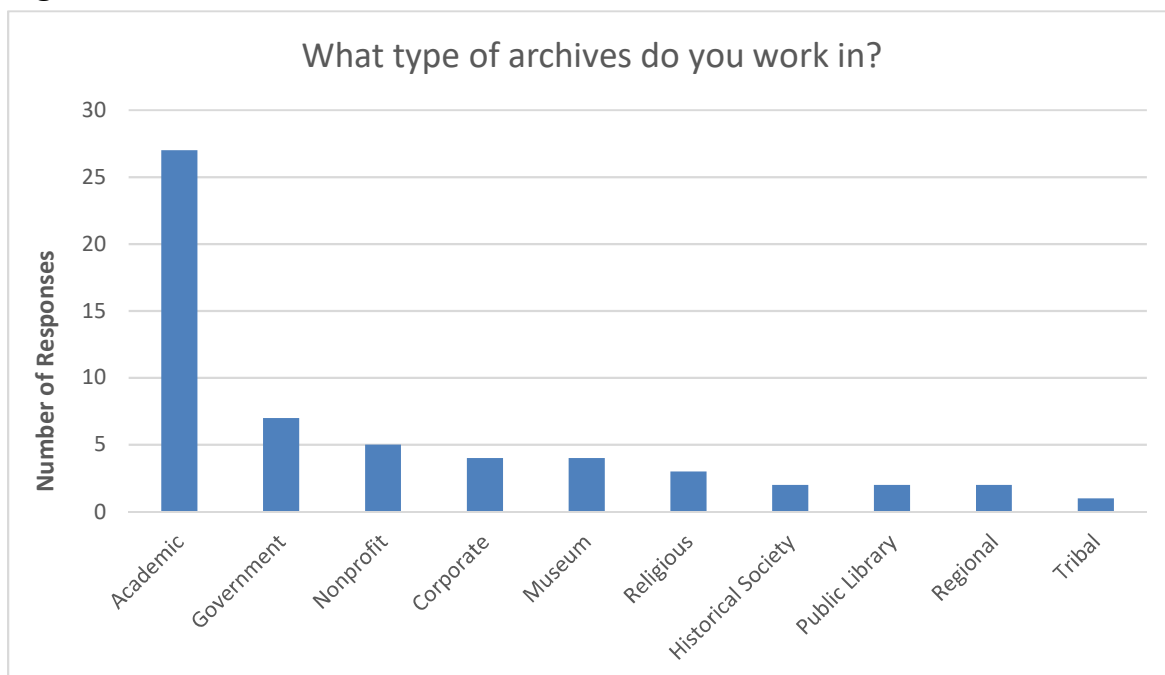
Of the 12 questions that were asked in the survey, 6 were free-response questions. The responses to each of the free-response questions were coded and sorted into categories; the following section describes the different themes that emerged from the identified categories in each question.

The first of the free-response questions asked what school participants received their degrees from, which resulted in a wide range of responses. This question was included to gauge whether results would be representative of graduate-level archival programs throughout the country. While some schools were more heavily represented than others (Simmons had the most with 9 responses, and the next highest, San Jose State University, had 6 responses, while many other schools were written in by only one or two respondents), there was a significant number of schools that were represented in the survey with a total of 30 different schools that were written in (see Figure 6).

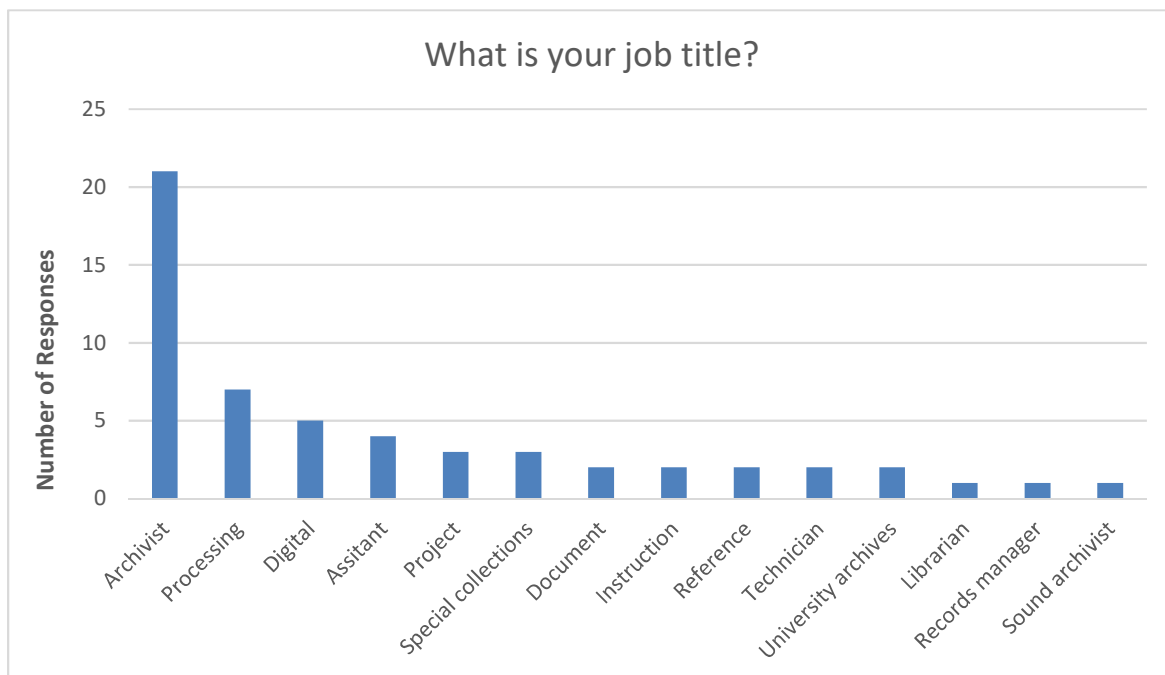
Figure 6



The next free-response question asked what type of archives each participant works in. There were many variations found within the responses that were then grouped together into 10 different categories based on the main type of institution that each respondent wrote in. The categories were: academic, which included any responses that noted academic, university, or college archives; government, which included responses of government, congressional collection, federal government, and state government; nonprofit, which had responses of nonprofit research institution, nonprofit organization, nonprofit school, and nonprofit specialized independent research library; corporate, which included responses of corporate and private/industrial; museum; religious; historical society; public library; regional; and tribal. A vast majority fell into the Academic category, with 47.37% responding in that category. The category with the next highest response rate of 12.28% was Government archives. Nonprofit archives had a response rate of 8.77%; Corporate archives and Museum archives each accounted for 7.02%; Religious archives were the next common at 5.26%; Historical Societies, Public Libraries, and Regional archives all accounted for 3.51% each; and with one response, Tribal archives represented the remaining 1.75% of institutions (see Figure 7).

Figure 7

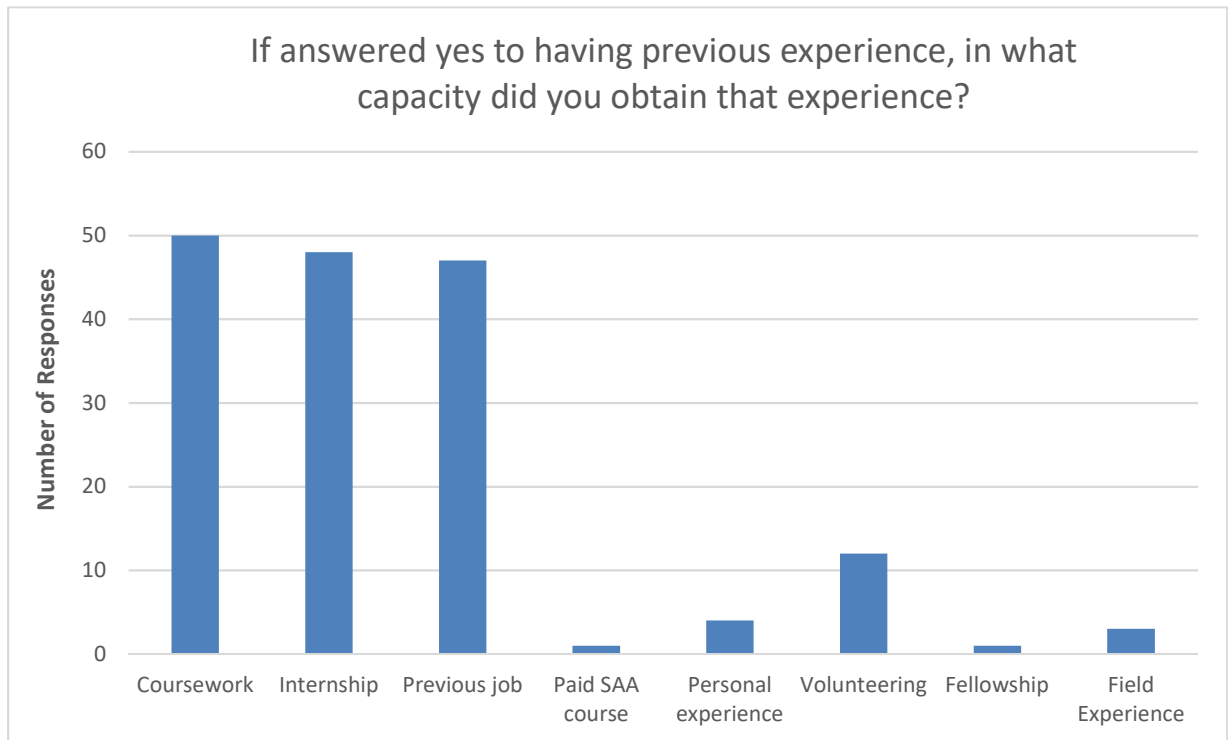
In regards to job title, there were again a range of responses. After coding and identifying the main themes that were represented by the responses for this question, there were 14 different categories of job title identified. Titles that were listed as “archivist,” “archivist I,” or “archivist II” had the largest percentage of responses at 37.50%, with the next highest having “processing” in the title, at 12.50%. The third highest response for job title was anything having “digital” in the title, such as “digital archivist” or “digital exhibitions coordinator,” at a response rate of 8.93%. The remaining 11 categories of titles were: assistant, project, special collections, document, instruction, reference, technician, university archives, librarian, records manager, and sound archivist, and each of these categories had between one and four respondents (see Figure 8).

Figure 8

The remaining free-response questions asked survey participants to write in three of their main job responsibilities (in no particular order) and to note whether they had previous experience in each of the listed responsibilities. If participants responded yes, they were then asked where their previous experience came from (e.g. coursework, internship, etc.). In order to analyze this data, all responses were grouped and coded to identify the major themes. There was a total of 156 responses from a pool of 57 people who completed this section of the survey, as some respondents chose to fill in all three, while others only included one or two of their main responsibilities (see Figure 9).

While information regarding the different responsibilities was collected, the main purpose of the inclusion of this section in the survey was to determine if respondents had previous experience with most of what they currently worked on day-to-day, and if so,

where that experience came from. For that purpose, only the results of whether or not participants indicated previous experience and what that experience are reported here. Of the 156 total responses for this combined question, 111 responded that they did have previous experience in the indicated responsibility, (71.15%). The coinciding responses of where that experience came from fell into one of 8 categories: coursework, fellowship, field experience, internship, job, paid SAA course, personal experience, and volunteering. In instances where respondents indicated more than one source of experience for the same responsibility, these responses were split and analyzed as separate data points (for example, if a respondent indicated that they had experience in reference from both coursework and an internship, this was recorded as one response for coursework and one response for internship). The results of this section showed that 30.12% indicated coursework as the source of previous experience, 28.92% indicated an internship as their source of experience, and 28.31% indicated a previous job as their source of experience. The next highest source was volunteering with 7.23%, and the remaining sources (fellowship, field experience, internship, paid SAA course, personal experience, and volunteering) with 2.41% or less (see Figure 9).

Figure 9

Discussion

There were three main research questions stated in the introduction: How prepared do first-year archival professionals feel in their first professional archivist roles after graduating from an archives master's program?; To what degree did their program contribute to their self-determined preparedness?; and Does the type of archives an individual works in affect the level of preparedness that individual felt they possessed when entering their first post-graduation archival role?

To answer the first research question, the survey for this study included an overall, general self-assessment of how prepared respondents feel in their first post-graduation professional archivist roles. The resulting data showed that overall, most people feel somewhere between somewhat prepared and extremely prepared, with a small portion feeling minimally prepared; no one that felt they were not at all prepared. While the 57 respondents that participated in this survey are not necessarily representative of the entire population of first-time professional archivists post-graduation, as all respondents are members of SAA, this study indicates strong feelings of preparedness for those who hold memberships with professional organizations.

An analysis of comparative data collected from two sections of this survey can be used in response to the second main research question posed, which sought to determine the extent that coursework within archival programs contributed to respondents feelings of preparedness. The first is question 6 in the survey, which asked respondents to rate to what extent different factors contributed to their feelings of preparedness. Most

participants ranked internships, field experiences, volunteering, and/or jobs held while in their graduate program as the top factor helping them to feel prepared in their first professional archivist role post-graduation, while coursework within the program itself was most often ranked as the secondary contributing factor. While this indicates that graduate-level archival coursework was not the least helpful factor in preparing students to become archivists, it is often considered helpful, just not the most helpful element.

The second section of this study used in response to this research question comes from the last section of the survey. Those who indicated they had previous experience in a certain aspect of their current job were asked to identify where that experience came from (e.g. coursework, internship, previous job, etc.). This section was included to identify whether or not students were gaining significant experience in common job duties from their graduate-level archives coursework. The results indicated that coursework was somewhat successful in providing students with experience in tasks they would go on to perform as archivists. While coursework received the most responses for this section, it still only accounted for approximately 30% of the responses. When other categories of responses are combined with other similar categories, such as jobs, internships, and field experiences, these represent a much larger portion of responses. For example, for those that answered yes to having previous experience in a main job responsibility, the responses of internship, fellowship, field experience, and previous job accounted for a combined 59.64% of responses. This indicates that while coursework is certainly helping prepare students to become archivists in certain aspects of archival work, there are many other areas that are factored into helping students transition into professional roles.

The final research question sought to answer whether the type of institution an archivist works in plays a role in their indicated degree of preparedness. In order to answer this research question, the responses for each of the 10 categories of institution type were compared with the respondents' evaluations of their levels of preparedness. To easier analyze the data, these responses were grouped into one of two possible assessments: minimally-somewhat and mostly-extremely (there were no responses for "not at all"). If judging whether the type of institution an archivist works in is associated with the archivist's self-determined degree of preparedness with just the data from this study, it would appear that those working in a public library environment felt the most prepared, and those working in tribal archives felt the least prepared. However, because there were 5 or less responses for each of these types of institution (only one response for tribal) it cannot be concluded from this data that this is representative of the archival field. Because academic libraries had the highest response rate (27 people), this is the only type of institution that can provide some degree of implication.

Based on the findings of this study, it would appear that more archivists who work in an academic setting in their first job after graduating feel either mostly or extremely prepared than minimally or somewhat prepared. However, because the margin of this is not overwhelming (40.74% fell into the minimally-somewhat prepared category while 59.26% fell into the mostly-extremely prepared category), more research needs to be done to determine if it is accurate to say that those who go into academic archives are more prepared those who go into archives in other types of institutions.

It is impossible to determine whether this sample is representative of the general population of early career archivists as the survey used for this study did not ask any

demographic questions to maintain privacy of respondents. While this suggests that the study is not generalizable, it is applicable to the population of interest who also hold memberships with a professional archival organization.

Conclusion

Overall, it can be determined from this study that most archivists in their first professional archival role post-graduation from an archival master's program who also hold membership with a professional archival organization feel prepared in their first roles. The results also demonstrate that these feelings of preparedness can be attributed mostly to internships or field experiences that participants held while in their programs; the coursework taken during the programs were mostly of secondary usefulness in preparing students to become archivists. This study demonstrated that a large majority of new archivists attribute partaking in internships and field experiences to their feelings of preparedness for their first job, schools could strengthen their archival programs even further by finding ways to integrate these kinds of hands-on learning experiences with complementary coursework that is representative of the range of skills needed to succeed in different types of institutions.

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